

Annual Report on Compliance with the Plain Writing Act of 2010
U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)
May 2018

Introduction

The Plain Writing Act of 2010 (the Act) requires federal agencies to prepare certain documents according to plain writing guidelines. These "covered documents" include documents relating to agency benefits and services and compliance with agency law and regulations. They include both paper and electronic versions of documents such as letters, notices, publications, forms, and instructions.

You may find guidance on complying with the Act's plain writing mandate in OMB's April 13, 2011 memorandum, *Final Guidance on Implementing the Plain Writing Act of 2010*.

The Act requires federal agencies to post Annual Compliance Reports. This is the U.S. Small Business Administration's annual report for 2017.

Implementation of the Act at the SBA

The SBA took appropriate steps, as required by the Act, to implement the Act in 2011. Recognizing that the Act creates a continuing obligation on covered agencies, SBA officials have continued their focus on increasing and reinforcing employee awareness of the Act, as well as monitoring compliance with the Act.

The SBA's Office of Executive Secretariat continues to encourage employees to complete the Plain Writing training, classes, and other related writing activities that stress plain writing principles. In 2017, the SBA offered two *Practical Writing* classes to Agency employees and three *Plain Language Brown Bag Lunch and Learn Sessions* (see Attachment 1). In addition, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) sought the SBA's Plain Language expertise to conduct Plain Language training for both HHS employees and SBA employees, which the SBA facilitated on April 20, 2017.

Furthermore, the SBA published in the SBA Daily, the Agency's internal daily newsletter, four Plain Language Tips, which effectively provided every employee throughout the Agency, both in the field offices and within headquarters, with tools to ensure compliance with

Plain Language requirements. Moreover, the SBA's Office of the Executive Secretariat vets and edits all correspondence to ensure Plain Language compliance.

Finally, the SBA earned the following scores on the 2017 Federal Plain Language Report Card (see Attachment 2):

Writing and Information Design: FAQ

B-

Data Infographic

A-

Attachments

Attachment 1
Data on Plain Writing Training for SBA Employees

TRAINING TYPE	DATE
Plain Language Practical Writing Class	1) May 24, 2017 2) June 21, 2017
Plain Language Brown Bag Lunch and Learn Session	1) April 19, 2017 2) May 3, 2017 3) May 31, 2017 4) April 20, 2017*
Published Plain Language Tip in SBA Daily	1) March 8, 2017 2) March 17, 2017 3) May 25, 2017 4) October 25, 2017

*Facilitated a Brown Bag Lunch and Learn for employees at the Department of Health and Human Services and the Small Business Administration

Attachment 2
Federal Plain Language 2017 Report Card

FEDERAL PLAIN LANGUAGE REPORT CARD 2017

Prepared by the Center for Plain Language

Agency	Writing and Information Design: FAQ	Data Infographic
Consumer Financial Protection Bureau	B	C+
Department of Agriculture	A	A
Department of Commerce	C	D+
Department of Defense	A	B+
Department of Education	A-	B
Department of Energy	C+	A-
Department of Health and Human Services	C+	C+
Department of Homeland Security	B	B+
Department of Housing and Urban Development	D+	C
Department of Justice	C-	C-
Department of Labor	A	B-
Department of State	A-	B
Department of the Interior	C-	A-

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A: Excellent B: Good C: Satisfactory D: Needs Improvement F: Fail

Department of the Treasury	D+	C-
Department of Transportation	C	C+
Department of Veterans Affairs	A-	C
General Services Administration	A	B-
National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)	C+	A-
National Archives and Records Administration	B-	C
Small Business Administration	B-	A-
Social Security Administration	A+	B

Chair, Center for Plain Language

Date

Summary

The SBA continues to make a concerted effort to embrace both the spirit and the letter of the Plain Language Act of 2010 by taking reasonable steps to ensure that Agency employees are aware of and comply with the Act. All available evidence suggests that the SBA takes the necessary steps to ensure compliance. The SBA will continue to monitor activities, and it will issue a new compliance report in the spring, 2019.